

WORKING-CLASS INFLUENCES

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majority. No strike has been able to withstand the rising waves of popular resentment. Nor does it appear too optimistic to expect that the clash of divergent interests will be softened by the broadening influence of the spirit of kindliness.

If these peacemakers fail, society may be distracted by troubles for which an autocratic dictatorship may be a welcome alternative.

So far, however, in England, the interests of the group, although they may temporarily obscure those of the party, have been unable to eclipse them. The achievements of political groups generally fall very far short of expectations, and with a revulsion of feeling, disappointed voters have disregarded the promises held out to them by their* class leaders for the more exciting prospects of a party contest. This tendency is clearly to be observed in the fortunes of the British Labour party. Did the voters segregate themselves in groups according to their personal interests every democratic country would be ruled by a Labour ministry. For the working classes by their preponderating numbers hold the issues of the elections in their hands.

Their influence has, unfortunately, so far prevailed as to infuse an unpatriotic note into British politics. The national flag may not wave over our school houses to symbolize to the young the claims of their country. In extraordinary

contrast the citizens of the United States. and the Canadians. lose no opportunity of displaying and saluting their national emblem. They are not divided by the ideas of class exclusiveness which have come down to us from mediæval days. and lead the British working man to believe that patriotism is a form of respect for the aristocracy. But suspicion of the national flag does not imply indifference to national pride; when this is